

Message Text

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21

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 PA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5332

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USBERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, WB, FR, UK, US

SUBJECT: PAA BERLIN - LONDON CHARTERS

REF: A. USBERLIN 2626 B. BONN 20636

1. SENIOR BRITISH BONN GROUP REP HITCH CALLED EMB CAA THIS MORNING, DECEMBER 24, TO REPORT THAT ACCORDING TO A MESSAGE JUST RECEIVED FROM LONDON, UKG WAS STICKING TO ITS DECISION NOT TO APPROVE ANY ADDITIONAL PAA CHARTERS DURING THE REMAINDER OF DECEMBER, AND TO APPROVE NONE AFTER JAN. 1. THIS DECISION, ACCORDING TO HITCH, WAS THE RESULT OF SEVERAL HIGH-LEVEL INTERAGENCY MEETINGS IN LONDON, AND REPRESENTED A BRITISH RESPONSE TO OUR EARLIER DEMARCHES MADE HERE, IN WASHINGTON, AND IN LONDON. THE UKG WAS WELL AWARE OF THE HARMFUL PUBLICITY WHICH COULD RESULT IF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF BERLINERS WERE "STRANDED" IN GREAT BRITAIN OVER THE HOLIDAYS AND WOULD TAKE WHATEVER STEPS WERE NECESSARY TO FACILITATE THE RETURN OF THESE PASSENGERS. IN THIS CONNECTION, ACCORDING TO HITCH'S MESSAGE, PAA HAD REQUESTED BA RUN ADDITIONAL SECTIONS ON ITS BERLIN-LONDON SERVICE IN

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ORDER TO RELIEVE THE SITUATION. IT WAS UNCLEAR AS YET

WHETHER BA WOULD BE ABLE TO MEET THE REQUEST AND IF SO, IF THE CARRIER WOULD CONSENT TO RUNNING SPECIAL CHARTERS FROM LONDON IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE THE COST TO THE CHARTERER.

2. HITCH ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED THE FACT THAT MANY OF THE PASSENGERS WHO WERE HAVING DIFFICULTY IN GETTING SPACE ON RETURN FLIGHTS HAD STAYED IN GREAT BRITAIN FAR BEYOND THE THREE AND SEVEN DAY INCLUSIVE TOUR PACKAGES THAT THEY HAD PURCHASED. HE THOUGHT THIS "HAD WEIGHED HEAVILY IN LONDON'S CONSIDERATION OF THE PROBLEM". WE EXPRESSED SERIOUS REGRETS AT LONDON'S RESPONSE TO OUR DEMARCHES, UNDERSCORING THAT OUR CONCERN OVER THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS WHICH WE ASCRIBED TO THE RESTRICTIVE CHARTER POLICIES PURSUED BY LONDON AND PARIS APPEARED TO BE FULLY JUSTIFIED BY THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVENTS. MOREOVER, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT PAA HAS BEEN UNJUSTIFIABLY DISADVANTAGED THROUGH THESE ACTIONS -- A FACT WE COULD NOT IGNORE. WE LIKEWISE POINTED OUT THAT THE FACT OF TRAVELERS OVERSTAYING THEIR VISITS IN VIOLATION OF THE CHARTER CONTRACT SUBMITTED TO THE CAA'S WAS, IN OUR VIEW, A FUNCTION OF THE RELATIVELY LOW COST OF THE CHARTER SERVICES PROVIDED BY ALL THREE CARRIERS IN THE MARKET AND WAS THEREFORE NOT RELEVANT TO THE BASIC PROBLEM SINCE PAA CLEARLY HAD NOT ATTEMPTED TO UNDERCUT THE PRICES OF ITS BRITISH COMPETITION. THE PROBLEM OF ENFORCING ADHERENCE TO CHARTER TYPES WAS OF COURSE ONE THAT MERITED ATTENTION, AND WE WOULD BE WILLING TO REVIEW THE MATTER IN THE CAA FORUM UNDER APPROPRIATE CIRCUMSTANCES.

3. WE HAD ALREADY TOLD PAA OFFICIAL GALLAGHER THAT WE DOUBTED THE BRITISH WOULD BE FORTHCOMING DURING THE HOLIDAY PERIOD AND SUGGESTED THAT HE WORK ON THE ASSUMPTION HE WOULD RECEIVE NO ADDITIONAL FLIGHT CLEARANCES. (AS OF YESTERDAY, WE HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED THAT PAA HAD GONE TO BA FOR ASSISTANCE.) SINCE YESTERDAY AFTERNOON WE HAVE HAD SIX ADDITIONAL APPLICATIONS FOR LAKER FLIGHTS, WHICH WE ASSUMED WERE BEING LAID ON TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASSIST IN RETURNING THE CHARTER PASSENGERS WHO WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE DIFFICULTY IN GETTING BACK TO BERLIN. IT SEEMS LIKELY, THEREFORE, THAT THERE WILL BE NO SERIOUS PROBLEM DEVELOPING OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS WITH THESE PASSENGERS, ALTHOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME MAY HAVE TO WAIT A DAY. WE WILL, OF COURSE, CONCUR IN ALL ADDITIONAL FLIGHTS BY BRITISH CARRIERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF RETURNING THESE PASSENGERS.

COMMENT: WE THINK A HIGH LEVEL DEMARCHE WITH THE
BRITISH IN WASHINGTON AS RECOMMENDED IN REF B IS NOW
WARRANTED. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE
SITUATION BY SEPTTEL.
HILLENBRAND

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